

Minutes of Aylesham and Snowdown's ANNUAL PARISH MEETING held Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 18.00pm at Aylesham House

Invitations sent to:

St Finbarr's Church; St Peter's Church; Aylesham Baptist Church; Aylesham Primary School; St Joseph's Catholic Primary School; Aylesham4Aylesham; Aylesham Art Club; Aylesham Carnival Association; Bechange; Aylesham & District Community Workshop Trust; Aylesham Hub Ltd; Roses Tea Room & Thrift Shop CIC; Aylesham Majorettes; Aylesham Heritage Centre; Snowdown Colliery Welfare Male Voice Choir; Aylesham People's Cinema; Aylesham In Touch Magazine; The White Cliffs Countryside Partnership; Dover District Council Community Development Officer Neil Chester.

1. Those Present

Cllr J. Pout (APC Chair); N Purcell (APC Acting Assistant Clerk); V.Scott (DDC); J.Flaig (Aylesham Hub Ltd); P.Sutcliffe & E. Norton (Aylesham Heritage Centre); M. Gass (Aylesham4Aylesham) M. Wrigley (White Cliffs Countryside Partnership); N. Ratcliffe (St Peter's Church); N.Chester (DDC); S. Bott (Aylesham & District Community Workshop Trust).

In addition, there were a further 4 members of the public present.

2. Apologies

Apologies & reports received from:

A.Doggett (Bechange); S.Williams (Aylesham People's Cinema).

Further apologies received from:

E. Barnes (A&DCWT); K.Robinson (APC Parish Clerk).

3. Minutes of Previous Annual Parish Meeting (Held: May 2022)

The minutes from the previous Annual Parish Meeting held on 26th May 2022 were agreed as a true and accurate record.

4. Aylesham Parish Council Chair's Annual Report

J. Pout gave a report as Chair of Aylesham Parish Council- See Appendix A

5. District & County Councillor Annual Reports

None received.

6. Reports from Local Organisations

Aylesham Heritage Centre-	Appendix B
Aylesham Hub Ltd-	Appendix C
Aylesham4Aylesham-	Appendix D
The White Cliffs Countryside Partnership-	Appendix E
St Peter's Church-	Appendix F
DDC Community Development Officer-	Appendix G

7. Questions: Residents will be given the opportunity to raise questions

None

8. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place during April 2024

-Meeting ended 18:40pm-

Appendix A-

Cllr J. Pout Chair's report for Aylesham Parish Council

This year I am speaking to you as Chair of Aylesham Parish Council, after having led this meeting previously as the Vice-Chair.

Aylesham Parish Council has changed significantly over the last 12 months: most importantly in that we finally filled all Councillor vacancies with David Fleck, Jon Flaig, Reece Miller, and David Miller joining us. Sadly, Reece and Jon did not get elected on 4th May 2023, but I would like to personally thank them for stepping up and supporting Aylesham Parish Council.

Thanks goes again to Parish Clerk Kate and Acting Assistant Clerk Nicola for all their hard work in carrying out the Parish Council's functions, communicating and meeting with the public, other local authorities and community groups plus providing Councillors with their much-needed expertise.

Finance, Grants and Community Support

Over the last financial year, we have given out a total of £7,000 in grants. Aylesham 4 Aylesham received £3,000 for the Jubilee celebration and the Summer Fayre on the Square, Aylesham Majorettes received £1,000 for new costumes, Aylesham Carnival Association received £1,000, Aylesham Hub Ltd received £1,000, Aylesham Heritage Centre received £500, and Aylesham & District Community Workshop Trust received £500. We thank these groups for the incredible work they do for the community.

In addition, we have paid out a further £10,000 in Section 137 payments to local charities. These were £6,000 to Bechange for their Drop-In Sessions, and Bechange in conjunction with Aylesham & District Community Workshop Trust £2,500 towards the Aylesham & Rural Pantry. A further £500 was donated to the Aylesham & District Community Workshop Trust to support the Warm Room initiative, and £1,000 was donated to Kent, Surrey & Sussex Air Ambulance.

Aylesham Parish Council have been working with Manse Designs Ltd on a redevelopment plan for Aylesham House. We are looking into options for making the space more usable for the Parish Council, as well as other users and these discussions are currently ongoing.

Recreation

The Skate Park and surrounding equipment saw some reconfiguration this year to ensure everything is safe and secure. We've experienced some vandalism and graffiti but, with the upgrades to CCTV in conjunction with Dover District Council, this should be easier to deal with moving forward.

White Cliffs Countryside Partnership continue to manage Spinney Woods on behalf of Aylesham Parish Council, along with local volunteers who attend their volunteering days.

This vital work allows the woods to flourish by effectively managing the area and a better mix of species has allowed mammals and rarer plants to return.

Envisage Groundcare Ltd are doing a brilliant job of keeping our open spaces/play areas in tip top condition for the benefit of all. We continue to receive many compliments about the quality of work that they maintain which is nice to hear.

The Market Square lighting project has now received final approval and additional lighting will be installed into the centre. This will greatly improve visibility and safety in the Market Square at night.

Planning

We have continued to oppose the reserved matters applications across the village for large scale development, mostly on the grounds of over development, poor parking design and a lack of local amenities.

We have worked extensively on the second consultation of Dover District Local Plan as well as first sighting of the Canterbury District Local Plan.

Summary

The last year has yet again been busy for Aylesham Parish Council, and I look forward to another year of hard work, along with other Councillors and Officers to promote our Parish.

Appendix B.

Phillip Sutcliffe for Aylesham Heritage Centre

Aylesham Heritage Centre thank the Parish council for the grant received of £500. The grants paid for our public liability insurance and contributed towards 100 copies of the book: Aylesham Through the Years.

Aylesham Heritage Centre is going from strength to strength. We have approximately 12 to 20 people visiting a week. We have received a visit from Aylesham Primary School Infants for their project titled 'What Is Aylesham?' We had approximately 60 children from the school who asked wonderful questions and the school would like to make an annual event.

We will be having the juniors from ocean primary school visiting on the 25th May 2023 09:30- 12:30, for their project about ancient Egypt. The children have made some artefacts and will be using the heritage centre as a museum for their work. Members of the public are encouraged to come and visit to support the children.

Appendix C

Jon Flaig for Aylesham Hub Ltd

Aylesham Hub Ltd was formed five years ago with the aim of creating a new community space for the village it highlighted a lack of provision for evening and social events. Currently we work with Individuals and organisations such as: Aylesham Arts Group; Aylesham People's Cinema; Aylesham in Touch and the We Are Aylesham Event. We continue to deliver a copy of the Aylesham in Touch magazine to every property in the Parish. Grant funding ensures the next issue will be delivered. We would like to thank local businesses and community groups that advertise and share their news for the content of the magazine.

Appendix D.

Mandy Gass for Aylesham4Aylesham.

Firstly, huge thanks to the Parish Council for the funds received which contributed toward the Jubilee event and the Summer Fayre on the Square. The aim of these is to make it a relaxed, affordable event.

With the help of St Peter's Church, we have also had a successful Christmas event too which is always well received by the community.

However, we are in need of support. We are currently down to 3 members, and we have been informed that the Santa Team wish to come on board and disband Aylesham4Aylesham.

It would be a shame to lose Aylesham4Aylesham, but we cannot manage it with such a small number of members, so if you think you have some time to give to support us and keep Aylesham4Aylesham running, please contact Mandy on aylesham4aylesham@hotmail.co.uk

Appendix E.

Melanie Wrigley for The White Cliffs Countryside Partnership

Jason had hoped to attend with me but sends his apologies as he is unwell.

Firstly, thanks given to Aylesham Parish Council for the money contributed to help manage Spinney Wood., which is an ancient woodland. It is a special place for local people to enjoy.

Over the winter we have been well underway with woodland management and have implemented coppice rotation. This benefits the wildlife in the woodland as allows trees to regrow and be healthy. It is good for the bluebells too. Instead of burning the wood that is cut, we have been making 'dead hedges' along the perimeter with the main road. This will act as a barrier and will hopefully reduce the amount of litter blown into the woodland. In time, we hope to plant live hedges within to allow them to grow.

The access points have been cleared and maintained, with log barriers installed to prevent vehicular/motorbike access to the wood. Safety checks are carried out regularly, and any dangerous trees identified are actioned accordingly. A bluebell walk took place on 26th April which saw 15 people attend.

There were two breeding bird surveys completed which identified two additional species present this year: the Goldcrest and rarer Firecrest.

We are hoping to get more involved with local groups such as the Cubs and Scouts, which have visited this year. We would happily work with any community group.

There is a volunteer day on the last Monday of each month, please get in touch if you want to be involved.

Appendix F.

Nick Ratcliffe for St Peter's Church

I would like to thank the Parish Council for its ongoing support for St Peter's Church. The church is open most days of the week for activities which we hope are for the benefit of the community as well as for worship and Christian teaching. This includes our Sunbeams toddler groups on three mornings, our after-school clubs and youth group in addition to our monthly social events at fortnightly breakfasts. We also host the Cubs, Scouts, and Slimming World, and provide a hire venue for family parties. We hope to develop a community garden in the coming year and are currently seeking substantial grants for our roof replacement, gutter and window refurbishment project.

Appendix G.

Neil Chester: Community Development Officer at DDC

Firstly, I am pleased to tell you I have been appointed for another year.

This year saw the end of both the enquire project for teenagers and the aspire project both of which were highly successful. The Aspire Project funded sport activities 4- to 18-year-olds such as horse-riding swimming and football. We have reached out with local clubs such as the karate club and boxing club in the village to liaise with them moving forward. We have been travelling the villages in the Community Roots Van, allowing people access to support and information. The Community Roots Van acted as digital hubs with laptops during the Local Plan consultation. We also worked alongside the Snowdown Male Voice Choir, and many local events such as the Aylesham4Aylesham Fayre on the Square, and Aylesham Carnival. CCTV in Aylesham has been upgraded with some cameras now including ANPR.

Appendix H.

Sue Bott for Aylesham & District Community Workshop Trust

Emily Barnes sends her apologies as she has a prior engagement.

Thank you to the Parish Council for the £500 grant toward the 'We are Aylesham' event.

The Art Club displayed some wonderful pieces of artwork related to the mining heritage of Aylesham as it is important for newcomers to the village to know about the heritage.

The first showings of the film 'We Are Aylesham' is in progress and is an ongoing project. We hope to show the film annually beginning in the autumn.

Thank you to the Parish Council for the grant of £500 toward the Warm Room project. This was originally going to happen all over the Parish with lots of venues but only happened at Aylesham & District Community Workshop Trust in the end. Nationally, the Warm Room incentive was accessed as much as expected. We spent the money on promoting the rooms and planned continue in the winter months.

As a Trust we plan outward focus to provide space for community groups. The Pantry is now up and running with approximately 40 members and 30 awaiting membership.

Appendix I.

Angela Doggett for Bechange

I would like to thank the Parish Council for their continued support with our drop-in service at Bechange Community Hub.

During the last year our team have support 243 beneficiaries throughout the year, with over half needing assistance in more than one area of their life. Needs vary from matters that can be dealt with quickly, such as completing forms and applying for Universal Credit to more complex issues such as advocacy to appeal for benefits or supporting beneficiaries to reduce debt, budgeting, or to access domestic abuse services. Our drop-in service is an important part of our offer, providing a welcoming and safe place for people to have an initial conversation about what may be troubling them. Our support team can often resolve issues in the first session, for example, downloading forms, helping with a benefit claim, or accessing emergency food parcels. This first point of contact for local people help make it easy for people to access assistance quickly. It is really positive that people know that they can walk into Bechange and get help, and generally we are seeing an increase in self-referrals as local people find out more about how we can help them. In April 22 – 31 March 23, we received 173 referrals, of which 85% were self-referrals, many of whom will have come through our drop-in services.

Our drop-in also provides an opportunity for people to visit us when they are in crisis, for example when they do not have sufficient food or energy to cook or heat their home. We work closely with Deal area foodbank and have issued 242 food parcels for people living in the Aylesham area during 22/23. This has increased from 122 the previous year and evidence points to a sharp increase in local people struggling as costs of living rises. We have also supported 128 households to access items to help with the cost-of-living crisis through the Household Support Fund, to the value of £17,750. We have issued 125 fuel vouchers,

through our partnerships with the Fuel Foundation, equalling a value of £6581. Without our drop-in service it would be more challenging to reach the people who are most in need in our community. People attending our drop in will, where necessary, be offered ongoing tailored one to one support and more than half the people we see at drop-in need further support. It also gives us an opportunity to link them in with other services that we have at Bechange, such as clubs, training, family activities and food services such as our community lunch and pack lunch scheme.

We would also like to thank you for your support with the Aylesham and Rural Pantry, a partnership with the Aylesham Community Trust. The Pantry project aims to support people at this very difficult time, when many households are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis. We are striving to make the Pantry a more hopeful and dignified ways to support people with their weekly budgeting. For a small membership of £4.50 per week, members will be able to choose from a range of items that will usually be a value of around £20-£30. By having a permanent shop in the Aylesham Community Trust we have been able to design the Pantry to look like local grocers' shop, so that people have a positive experience when they visit. We are currently open for volunteers to train and phasing memberships, with more people joining each week. This is going really well, and we have been able to take on 42 members who are already shopping with us and a further 36 waiting to be signed up. Our official launch date is 22nd May, please do join us if you are able to.

-End of Appendices-